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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROGRAMS IN KOKSHETAU - NGO
MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE IN A SMALL PLACE

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REFTEL: ASTANA 1206

¶1. SUMMARY: During a November 12-13 visit to northern city of Kokshetau, the DCM reviewed efforts to fight trafficking in persons (TIP). She met with a local NGO, visited its shelter for victims of trafficking, and opened the anti-trafficking play "Night Stars" and a trafficking-prevention training course for community police officers. The force behind the anti-trafficking successes in Kokshetau is Galina Morozova, whose influence has effectively raised awareness and helped victims in this mid-sized community. END SUMMARY.

THE FEMINIST LEAGUE

¶2. One of the oldest, as well as the most experienced and effective anti-trafficking non-governmental organization in Kazakhstan, the Feminist League is a member of three large anti-trafficking NGO networks: the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Association against Trafficking in Persons in Central Asia (AATIPCA), and the Union of Crisis Centers (UCC). The Feminist League receives occasional funding from all three networks. In 1998 when the Feminist League began to combat human trafficking, Kazakhstan was a Tier 3 country. Authorities were not willing to accept that Kazakhstan was a country of origin for sexual exploitation. Women were trafficked from Kazakhstan to Greece, Israel, Romania, and Turkey. Galina Morozova, President of the Feminist League, helped victims return to their home cities and provided assistance and protection in a make-shift shelter in her home.

¶3. Morozova has actively participated in and implemented many U.S.-funded programs. In 2000, she received her first grant from the Embassy's Democracy Commission to train police officers in Uralsk, Kostanai, and Pavlodar. From 2001 to 2008, Morozova operated a hotline and conducted a series of anti-trafficking information campaigns with a USAID grant. Morozova participated in this year's USAID Community Connections program in Los Angeles and in the International Visitors Leadership program in 2003. This year, she received an INL grant through the AATIPCA network to train community police officers to identify victims of trafficking. She

also received a direct INL grant to bring the anti-trafficking play "Night Stars" to Astana (reftel).

SHELTER

14. In 2008, the Feminist League established a TIP Shelter in Kokshetau with funds provided by the Embassy of the Netherlands through a grant to IOM. Following an initial meeting, Morozova accompanied the DCM to the shelter to which the DCM presented clothing, cosmetics, and toiletries donated by the Embassy community. An unassuming house in the suburbs of Kokshetau with a high wall, locking gates, and video surveillance, the shelter has two offices, a kitchen, a living room, and three bedrooms for victims. Three female residents, including two minors, currently reside in the shelter, which can house up to 15 victims. The shelter has a social worker, psychologist, and security personnel.

15. Morozova, the social worker, and psychologist recounted the story of each current resident:

- At a very young age after 16-year-old Marina lost her parents, her grandmother and uncle moved her from the city of Kokshetau to an orphanage in a village in the region. When she was 15 years old, she returned to Kokshetau to live with her grandmother and uncle and attend school. Her uncle drank heavily and abused her on a daily basis. After she ran away from home several times, a classmate took her to a brothel where she was forced to work as a prostitute. (NOTE: Recruitment by victims in exchange for their freedom has been reported in several cases. END NOTE.) She eventually gave birth to a child, who was taken away from her two months later, and threats to the child were used to convince her to continue working. Morozova learned about Marina from another girl in the shelter,

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called police, and joined them in a rescue operation.

- When she was 12 years old, a 16-year-old from Karagandinskaya Oblast was kicked out of the house after telling her mother that her stepfather had raped her. She lived for three years with a twenty-five-year-old man before she was forced to work as a prostitute in Karaganda, Astana, and Kokshetau. Police rescued her upon receipt of an anonymous tip. In the shelter, she has been trained as a hairdresser. A few days before the DCM's visit, the girl learned from her mother that her step-father had died. She now plans to return home.

- A 27-year-old woman, originally from Astana, moved to a village in Kostanaiskaya Oblast after her mother's death in order to live with her elder sister. After she divorced her husband, she returned to Astana to see her brother-in-law and look for a job. When she arrived, her brother-in-law took her documents and sold her to a pimp. Two years later, she escaped to Kokshetau where she was found by police officers during an anti-trafficking operation. 20-weeks pregnant upon arrival at the shelter, she refused to keep the baby, because she did not know the identity of the father. She was trained as a manicurist at the shelter and will leave the shelter once she finds a job and apartment.

"NIGHT STARS" AND TRAINING

16. On November 13, the DCM delivered opening remarks at a victim-identification training seminar for community police officers conducted by Morozova and funded by INL through a grant to ATIPCA. Even though community police do not investigate trafficking cases, they are first responders and most likely the first to encounter a trafficking victim. Their ability to recognize trafficking crimes will help them save victims before they disappear. Morozova's workshop drew 100 percent participation and the staff leader spoke earnestly about the importance of his officers' work to fight trafficking. The INL project is training 900 community police officers in 36 trainings sessions conducted by nine NGOs throughout Kazakhstan. Feminist League is conducting four training sessions in Kokshetau, Astana, and two villages in the Akmolinskaya Oblast. Once completed, post will report the project septel.

¶17. The evening before the seminar, Morozova drew a group of community police officers to a performance of the anti-trafficking play "Night Stars" in the Russian Drama Theater, at which the DCM delivered opening remarks. Twice a week performances of "Night Stars" for more than five years has created significant public awareness and received rave reviews and standing ovations. INL funded 10 performances in Astana for approximately 9,000 high school and college students (reftel). During her opening remarks, the DCM congratulated the Director of the Russian Drama Theater Anatolyi Tarasov on the success of the play and presented him a certificate of appreciation from the Ambassador for his personal contributions to the global fight against human trafficking.

POLITICIANS ON BOARD

¶18. Morozova has such influence that when the DCM met with the deputy governor and mayor, each spent time praising the NGO's work and decrying the problem of trafficking. The deputy governor made space for Morozova at the oblast's table during the meeting. The mayor's remarks were covered by the local press.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND TIP COMMISSION

¶19. During the trip, INL Officer and Program Manager met Pawel Triszh, Deputy Director of the Akmolinskaya Department of Justice and Chair of the oblast's TIP Commission. The Department of Justice leads coordination of anti-trafficking efforts in the oblasts and is responsible for implementation of the government's TIP plan. Despite regular INL contact with the Ministry of Justice, opportunities rarely arise to discuss trafficking with the oblast-level departments. A wide-range of government agencies including the Akimats, the Departments of Interior, National

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Security, Tourism and Sport, Labor and Social Protection, and Education, comprise the TIP Commission. In Kokshetau, the Feminist League and a local newspaper also actively participate in the Commission, which meets regularly. According to Triszh, Morozova maintains daily contact with him on current trafficking issues.

¶10. Triszh underscored the tragic nature of even one case of trafficking in a region where trafficking is a low-level, but persistent problem. Therefore, this TIP Commission has focused heavily on prevention and works closely with the media, NGOs, and tourist agencies to increase public awareness. Triszh reported that there were 13 trafficking cases in 2008 and 10 cases in the first 10 months of 2009. When asked whether he would characterize his oblast as a source or destination for trafficking, he explained that trafficking is primarily internal for sexual exploitation with young women being trafficked from villages into larger cities and resort areas. (NOTE: The resort area of Borovoye, located approximately 100 kilometers south-east of Kokshetau, is a common destination for short vacations from Astana. END NOTE.) He also explained that the oblast is a destination for labor exploitation because of the construction industry.

¶11. INL Officer suggested Triszh consider inclusion of drug demand reduction in the anti-trafficking information campaigns as part of his prevention efforts. Triszh seemed interested and committed to study the idea.

¶12. COMMENT: Recognizing the problem of trafficking in persons, NGO and government officials in Kokshetau are working to help victims, convict traffickers, and eliminate the problem by increasing awareness among the citizens of the Akmolinskaya Oblast. INL Officer has often raised the need to combine drug-demand-reduction and trafficking awareness programs at the national and international level, but he never previously had the opportunity to raise this idea at the local level. This type of interaction may be the key to launching this project in Kazakhstan. END COMMENT.

SPRATLEN